Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 IO-13 OMB-01 ACDA-07 /087 W
----------081313Z 113859 /53
P 081230Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1204
INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 0177

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, AO, CG
SUBJECT: GOZ RECOGNITION OF ANGOLA

REF: KINSHASA 0087

1. DURING MEETING JANUARY 7 PRESIDENCY DIRECTOR BISENGIMANA CONFIRMED TO AMBASSADOR THAT MOBUTU'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF GOZ RECOGNITION OF ANGOLAN REGIME (REFTEL) WAS UNILATERAL ACTION TAKEN AFTER GOZ WAS UNABLE TO MAKE ANY PROGRESS IN RESOLVING BILATERAL ISSUES THROUGH MIXED COMMISSION. BISENGIMANA ACKNOWLEDGED THERE HAD BEEN NO PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH PRA CONCERNING ANNOUNCEMENT AND HE WAS MOST INTERESTED IN SEEING HOW ANGOLANS WOULD REACT. HE SAID ANGOLANS HAD REPEATEDLY ACCUSED ZAIRE OF OBSTRUCTING PROGRESS TOWARD NORMALIZATION AND HAD INSISTED ON FULL RECOGNITION. NOW GOZ HAD IN EFFECT CALLED THEIR BLUFF AND BALL WAS CLEARLY IN THEIR SIDE OF THE COURT.

2. BISENGIMANA NOTED FURTHER THAT PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT HAD BEEN CONFIDENTIAL

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CAREFULLY DRAFTED SO AS TO AVOID GIVING PRA VALID REASONS FOR OBJECTING: E.G., THERE WAS NO REFERENCE TO PRESENCE OF FOREIGN TROOPS OR DEMAND FOR THEIR WITHDRAWAL. AS FOR MOBUTU'S APPEAL FOR NATIONAL RECONCILIATION, PRA COULD HARDLY MAKE AN ISSUE OF THIS SINCE THEY THEMSELVES HAD CONCURRED IN THIS PRINCIPLE AT THE ORIGINAL BRAZZAVILLE MEETING LAST FEBRUARY.

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3. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUERY RE REOPENING OF THE BENGUELA RAILROAD (WHICH, ACCORDING TO ONE REPORT, GOZ HAD INSISTED BE DISCUSSED IN BILATERAL COMMISSION PRIOR TO AGREEMENT ON RECOGNITION), BISENGIMANA MADE CLEAR HIS EXPECTATION THAT RAILROAD COULD NOT BE OPENED IN ANY CASE BECAUSE OF PRA'S INABILITY TO PREVENT UNITA ATTACKS ON THE LINE. "WHAT IS THE SENSE OF LUANDA'S COMPLAINING ABOUT UNREPAIRED BRIDGES AT DILOLO," BISENGIMANA SAID, "WHEN IT CAN'T EVEN RUN A TRAIN SAFELY THROUGH ITS OWN TERRITORY?"

COMMENT: BISENGIMANA CLEARLY VIEWS PRESIDENT'S SURPRISE ANNOUNCEMENT AS NEAT POLITICAL PLOY TO PUT PRA ON DEFENSIVE AND TO INDUCE FORWARD MOVEMENT IN RESOLVING OUTSTANDING ISSUES. AT SAME TIME, ZAIRE HAS REMOVED ITSELF FROM DWINDLING RANKS OF AFRICAN STATES WHICH ARE HOLDING OUT ON RECOGNITION. PROBABLE ADDITIONAL MOTIVATION IS EXPECTATION THAT US POSTURE VIS-A-VIS ANGOLA IS LIKELY TO SHIFT UNDER NEW ADMINISTRATION.
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